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BAPTISTS

Memorial to Missing declared filled

By William H. Perkins Jr.
Editor

Mississippi Baptists have finished filling the Memorial to the Missing with 50 million pennies, but no one is celebrating the milestone.

That's because each penny inside the Memorial, located on the grounds of the Baptist Building in Jackson, represents a child that has been killed since the U.S. Supreme Court in 1973 legalized abortion nationwide during the entire nine months of pregnancy.

Jimmy Porter, executive director of the Mississippi Baptist Christian Action Commission, announced at the annual meeting of the Mississippi Baptist Convention October 28-29 at First Church, Jackson, that the two-and-a-half year campaign to memorialize all the lives that have been lost to legalized abortion in America has been completed.

"The sad part is, the abortion toll in this country has gone well over 50 million since we began the Memorial. While the Memorial cannot hold any more pennies, the abortions continue," Porter said.

"I want to thank the churches for their involvement and for bringing their pennies to the Memorial. They were faithful to see this project through to completion. I don't think there is anything that has caught the attention of Mississippi Baptists like this one project. Wherever I go, people ask me about the Memorial. It is a joy to tell them, 'Yes, it's filled,'" Porter said.

Jim Futral, executive director of the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board, said, "It is encouraging to live in the state that is recognized as the most pro-life in the country. We are grateful to all the people, many of them Mississippi Baptists, who have made that statement possible.



50 MILLION REMEMBERED — The Memorial to the Missing at the Baptist Building stands in mute testimony to the 50 million lives that have been lost to legalized abortion since 1973. Each penny in the Memorial represents one of the 50 million babies that has been killed since the U.S. Supreme Court struck down state abortion laws and opened the door to abortion nationwide during the entire nine months of pregnancy. (Photo by William H. Perkins Jr.)

A MEMORIAL TO THE MISSING

Before you is a collection of 50 million pennies! Each penny represents one child who has been aborted since the Supreme Court decision *Roe vs. Wade* in 1973. A penny like a baby seems to be so small and sometimes of very little worth, but when seen in a collection of 50 million it becomes enormous. Each coin is a person, but in many cases it also represents the difficult process of decision-making, fear, and loneliness. While some speak of pro-choice, these babies had no choice. While some speak of a mother's right to control her own body, 50 million babies were not given their right to live. Fifty million missing children represented by these pennies must be cause for us to stop, pray, consider what we are doing as a nation, ask God to forgive us, seek ways to help those who are struggling with the decision, and look to the Lord to restore each of us.

To comment, receive help, or to tell your story, go to www.christianaction.com

FOR THE BABIES — A plaque resting in front of the Memorial to the Missing at the Baptist Building in downtown Jackson explains the true meaning of the just-completed Mississippi Baptist campaign to memorialize the 50 million children lost to legalized abortion in America. (Photo by William H. Perkins Jr.)

"We have only one abortion clinic left in the entire state, and we pray that it will go out of existence due to non-use. Thank you, Mississippi Baptists, for the prayer and care and resources that you poured into the Memorial. You have made a significant statement to America and the world."

The Memorial opened on Mother's Day weekend of 2006 with a statewide rally to dedicate the campaign to the glory of God and place the first pennies in the container, located on the northwest corner of the Baptist Building property in downtown Jackson facing the State Capitol.

About 20 million pennies were brought to the Memorial that day. Since then, a steady stream of pennies from Mississippi Baptist churches and individuals has been placed in the Memorial until the 50 millionth penny was deposited a few weeks ago.

The massive, 13' x 7' container that holds the pennies is constructed of heavy tubular steel and polycarbonate sheeting — commonly known as bullet-proof glass. Reinforced concrete pilings 14 feet deep support the 140 tons of pennies now in the Memorial. Laws Construction Company of Jackson provided the construction labor free of charge.

"Every year, millions of people visit Washington, D.C., and see the Vietnam Memorial. On that black slab are 58,249 names of young men and women who gave their lives in Vietnam, but that doesn't begin to compare to the millions of

children in America who have lost their lives silently, in sterile environments as they have died, day after day," Futral said on the day the Memorial opened.

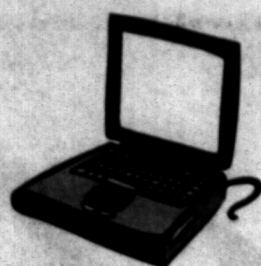
Porter said the Memorial will stay in place for a period of time, its towering wall of pennies standing in mute testimony to the lives lost to legalized abortion in America.

"The focus is on the babies, as it should be, and not the pennies," Futral said.

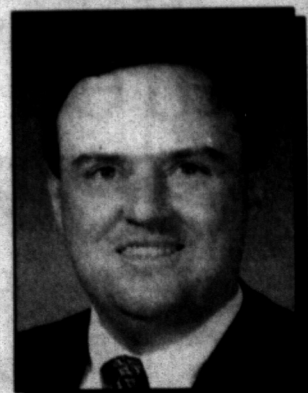
When the Memorial is finally emptied, the totality of donations to the campaign will be placed in a special account with the Mississippi Baptist Foundation to be used for pro-life programs and causes.

Contributions are still being accepted for the Memorial, Porter added. "We have reached the design limits of the Memorial with the 50 million pennies inside, but we will continue to remember the babies in this special way. Churches and individuals can continue to contribute. We will still be accepting pennies, but it would be better now if donations were in the form of checks designated to the Memorial to the Missing."

For more information on the Memorial to the Missing, contact the Mississippi Baptist Christian Action Commission at P.O. Box 530, Jackson, MS 39205-0530. Telephone: (601) 292-3329 or toll-free outside Jackson (800) 748-1651, ext. 329. E-mail: rmccollum@christianaction.com. Web site: www.christianaction.com.



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Our American elections

Elections are a most interesting component of our system of government. In many countries, elections are just a rubber stamp for the dictator or party in power. Not so in America, where elections really mean something and can lead to true changes in our national polity.

We tend to get all wrapped up in the top races, for president or governor or mayor, because that's where the spotlight falls and the high drama is acted out. There's another important aspect of American elections, though, and that's the "down ballot" items.

Down ballot items are generally those less spectacular races and referenda that don't generate as much political heat and fury as the higher profile, up ballot races.

In this election cycle just ended, however, several of those lowly down ticket items caught a lot of interest from voters and could be a barometer of the American electorate's attitude — for good or bad.

On November 4, five states had pro-life measures on ballots and all five were lost. Colorado voters defeated a constitutional amendment that would have protected unborn humans "from the moment of conception." A measure in South Dakota to criminalize abortion except in cases of rape, incest, or to save the life of the mother failed by a margin of 55%-45%.

California's Proposition 4 would have mandated doctors notify parents of minor, unwed children before performing abortions, but that too was defeated. Michigan voters approved a constitutional amend-



ment permitting embryonic stem cell research, and Washington State voters approved assisted suicide.

Anti-gambling forces turned back casinos in Ohio and Maine by large margins. Greyhound racing in Massachusetts was outlawed. However, a lottery was approved in Arkansas, gambling restrictions were loosened in Missouri, and slot machines are on the way to Maryland.

While Massachusetts voters didn't like dog racing, they didn't have a problem decriminalizing marijuana, making possession of less than an ounce a civil fine of \$100. Michigan became the 13th state to approve the use of medical marijuana. Florida and Arizona passed marriage amendments, but

California's Proposition Eight was by far the highest profile down ticket item in this year's election cycle. Prop 8 was a reaction to the California Supreme Court's legalization of same sex marriage by judicial fiat. Voters weren't happy with the judiciary's social engineering, and sent a clear message that judges should stick to judging.

In the most populous — and one of the most liberal — states in the union, voters overwhelmingly supported Democrat Barack Obama for president but also chose to approve Prop 8's mandate for a constitutional amendment defining marriage as the union of one man and one woman.

President-elect Obama carried the Golden State 61% to Republican John McCain's 37%, but they also passed conservative Prop 8 by 52%-48% despite the liberal establishment's all-out effort to defeat the measure. That would seem to be an electoral contradiction.

Sociologists and political pundits will no doubt offer detailed explanations as to the cause of such schizoid behavior on the part of voters, but one clear message seems to be that many of the most liberal/progressive voters aren't ready to give up on traditional marriage and the traditional families in which many of them, like us, were raised.

There should be no clearer picture of traditional marriage than the Bible-based Christian marriage. Problem is, we've messed that up to the point many of our marriages aren't much different than any other. Compare family dysfunction rates and divorce statistics to drive home that point.

Let's get our own marriages in order, be a model for a lost world, and maybe there will be a lot more Prop 8s in our future. Let's hope, and pray.

Dear President-elect Obama,

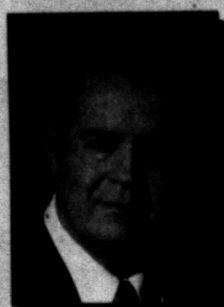
First, congratulations on your successful campaign to become the 44th president of our beloved United States of America. This was a historic election in terms of the massive increase in voter participation as a percentage of the electorate.

I hope you know that there are tens of millions of Americans who did not vote for you who are still very, very pleased that an African-American has been elected president of the United States.

The fact that this could happen in a country with as tragic a racial past as America's says something noble and fine about the American experiment and the glorious "opportunity democracy" it has spawned. After much struggle, we as a nation have chosen together to live up to the promises of our founding document, the Declaration of Independence: "We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness."

Mr. President-elect, the Bible exhorts us to pray for "kings and all who are in authority" (1 Timothy 2:1-2). We, therefore, covenant to pray for you, your family, and your administration. We will pray that God will grant

GUEST OPINION:



An excellent place for unity

By Richard Land, president
Ethics and Religious Liberty Comm.
Southern Baptist Convention

you godly wisdom in all your decision-making. We pray with faith and confidence that "the king's heart is in the hand of the Lord, as the rivers of water; he turneth it whithersoever he will" (Proverbs 21:1).

On issues which involve moral and ethical values, we will both pray for you and exhort you to apply biblical principles and values as you make policy decisions which will impact the families of America and the world. We will also pray that God will bless you with safety, health and all spiritual blessings.

On issues where we agree, such as standing against genocide in Darfur and protecting basic human rights around the world, we will support you. On issues where we disagree with the approach your administration takes, we will do our best to persuade you to change your approach. When we are unsuccessful, we will stand by our

convictions and will exercise our God-given responsibilities and Constitutionally protected right to work for alternative solutions which are more in accord with our convictions.

Southern Baptists remain unalterably committed to the protection of unborn human life. The vast majority of Southern Baptists believe that a pre-born baby is a distinct human life, according to both science and the Bible (Psalms 51:5; Psalms 139:13-16; Jeremiah 1:5; Luke 1:41). The euphemism of "choice" or "reproductive freedom" cannot disguise or justify killing a baby.

Government has a proper role in protecting lives, including the lives of the unborn. Southern Baptists, by national resolutions, have opposed abortion on demand, and have called for public policies which severely restrict abortion and which promote alternatives such as adoption.

Mr. President-elect, you have said you want to unite us as a nation. An excellent place to work for such unity and consensus on the life issue would be for you to put your full and vigorous support behind the Democrats for Life House Caucus initiative known as the Pregnant Women Support Act or the 95-10 Initiative (because its goal is to reduce abortion by 95% over a 10-year period).

This bill (H.R. 3192 and S. 2407) was sponsored in the last Congress by Rep. Lincoln Davis (D-Tn.) and Sen. Robert Casey (D-Pa.). This measure would help fulfill the pledge made in the 2008 Democratic Party platform, which "strongly supports a woman's decision to have a child by ensuring access to and availability of programs for pre- and post-natal health care, parenting skills, income support, and caring adoption programs."

Mr. President-elect, America needs moral conviction, not moral neutrality. America's children need a model of leadership committed both to excellence and to virtue. May God help you, Mr. President-elect, and make you that leader, and may God bless America!

Yours in His service,
Richard Land

The Ethics and Religious Liberty Commission is based in Nashville. Web site: www.erlc.com. Land's commentary appears courtesy of Baptist Press.

Calif. voters affirm traditional marriage

SACRAMENTO, Calif. (BP) — Back in July, when a Field Poll was released showing that California Proposition 8 — the constitutional amendment which overturned a state Supreme Court ruling and banned same sex marriage — was trailing 51%-42% among likely voters, the Election Day outlook for supporters of traditional marriage wasn't too bright. Two months later, when a mid-September Field Poll showed Prop 8 backers behind 55%-38%, the outlook turned grim.

So how did supporters of Proposition 8 manage, in a mere seven weeks, to turn a 17-point polling deficit into a five-point Election Day victory? It had even trailed in the final three pre-election polls.

Experts and supporters of Prop 8 point to a number of factors, led by three main ones:

-- a solid, consistent message about the impact of same sex marriage on public schools.

-- better-than-expected fundraising.

-- historical cooperation among various religious groups to back the measure and get out the vote.

The 52.5%-47.5% victory resulted in perhaps the biggest setback yet for the movement to legalize same sex marriage nationwide -- as opponents of Prop 8 acknowledge -- and one of the most successful campaigns in the history of the pro-family movement. The day after the election, cities across California, including Los Angeles, already were stopping issuing marriage licenses to same-sex couples.

Several lawsuits, led by the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) and the city of San Francisco, were filed at the California Supreme Court in an attempt to try and prevent Prop 8 from taking effect, but the suits appear to be long shots.

Glen Lavy, an attorney with the conservative Alliance Defense Fund, labeled the passage of Prop 8 as "huge" in the effort to stop the spread of same sex marriage to all 50 states. "California is the largest state in the country," he told Baptist Press. "It has more than 12% of the U.S. population and to quote San Francisco Mayor Gavin Newsom, 'As California goes, so goes the nation.' I like that at this point."

In June, one month after the California Supreme Court issued its ruling, a coalition of liberal and homosexual activist groups led by the ACLU and the Human Rights Campaign released a joint statement laying out their strategy for legalizing same sex marriage nationwide. At the top of the list was defeating Prop 8.

"A loss on the initiative in California -- a loss at the hands of voters -- would be particularly damaging to work in other

state legislatures and other state courts," the statement said in part. "That makes the California campaign of prime importance... Marriage in California will transform the national debate on the freedom to marry. It will do that because the decision is well-reasoned constitutional law from the most influential state court in the nation. It will do that because California is an American trendsetter. But marriage in California will do those things only if we can hold onto it."

Conservatives now have a record of 30-1 in passing marriage amendments nationwide, and that one loss was several years ago in Arizona -- which on Election Day 2008 reversed course and passed a marriage amendment.

Here's a look at the various elements that led to Prop 8's victory:

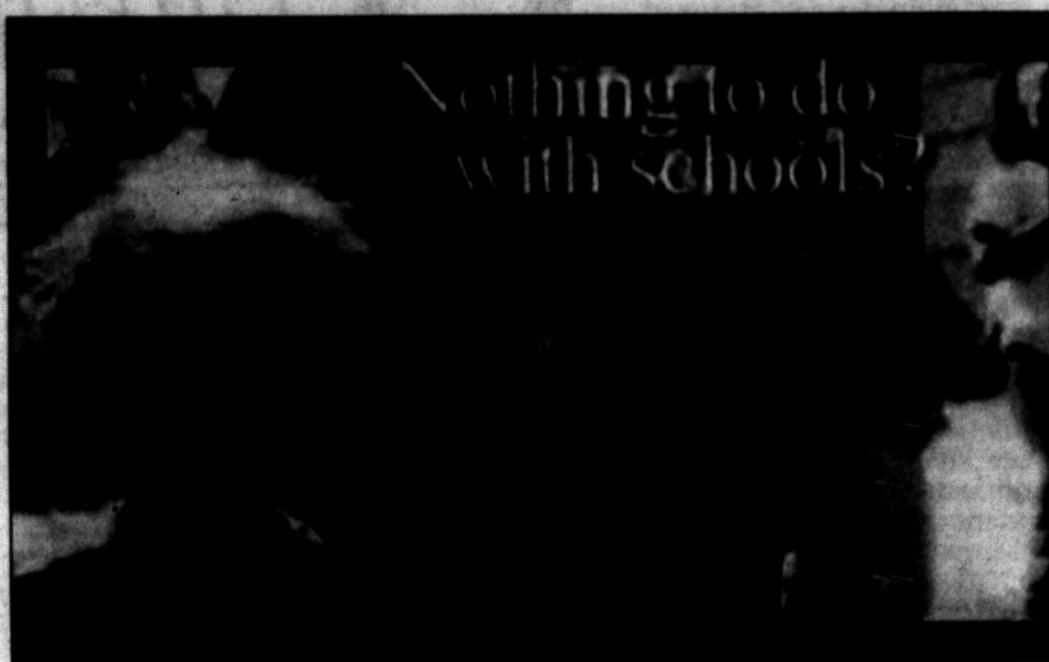
-- A consistent message about public schools. About two weeks after the September Field Poll showed them trailing by 17 points, Prop 8 officials ran their first television commercial showcasing Richard Peterson, a professor at Pepperdine University School of Law, listing the implications of same sex marriage legalization. "People sued over personal beliefs, churches could lose their tax-exemption, gay marriage taught in public schools," he said.

Every remaining TV commercial by the Yes on 8 campaign mentioned the public school aspect. The commercials pointed to a California law that requires schools that teach comprehensive sex-education to include "instruction and materials" that "teach respect for marriage and committed relationships."

According to data on the state website, 96% of school districts teach sex-ed and would be required to teach that marriage includes homosexual couples.

"It was one of those issues that we saw resonating with the undecideds," said Chris Clark, pastor of East Clairemont Southern Baptist Church in San Diego and a lead supporter of Prop 8. "It put the other side on the defensive and they had to spend inordinate amounts of money to rebut what we said, but their rebuttals were easily refuted and we refuted them by pointing to the California Department of Education's own websites."

The message was reinforced when a San Francisco public school first-grade class took a daytime field trip to city hall to



Public schools became the focus in the debate over Proposition 8 in California to overturn a recent California Supreme Court ruling that legalized same sex marriage in that state. This TV ad showed first-grade students on a "lesbian wedding" field trip. On Election Day, Prop 8 passed by a five-point margin. (BP photo)

celebrate their lesbian teacher's same sex wedding. The California Teachers Association further drove home the point of Prop 8 supporters by donating more than one million dollars to the opponents' campaign.

"That [tying same sex marriage to public schools] was certainly a good strategy, because people don't want their children being taught that same-sex marriage is the norm," Lavy said.

-- Better-than-expected fundraising. Prop 8 supporters finished in a virtual tie with opponents on fundraising, with each side raising between \$35-\$40 million. When comparing the fundraising battle in California to marriage amendment drives in other states, California's situation stands out.

"This is the first time that proponents of marriage have not been outspent at least 2-to-1 and sometimes as much at 10-to-1 by the opponents of marriage," Lavy said. "Usually, our side is way underrepresented, but fortunately there was a lot of support for it this time around."

ProtectMarriage.com, the main group that supported the amendment, said it had more than 70,000 contributors. Between a fourth and a fifth of

its funds were raised in the final two weeks when money was badly needed in order to rebut a well-funded, final-push ad campaign by opponents.

Clark said he was "completely stunned" by the supporters' fundraising success. "We were going into this campaign fully expecting to be outspent 3-to-1," he said. "... It wasn't just the large donors. It was the thousands and thousands of California residents that were giving \$20, \$50, \$100 over and over and over again that made this work."

-- Cooperation among and involvement of religious groups. Evangelicals, Catholics, and Mormons were just three of the religious groups that worked together to pass Prop 8. The cooperation transcended politics and race, as seen by the 70% of African American and 53% of Latino voters who backed it.

Increased African-American turnout helped make the difference: In 2004, blacks made up six percent of California voters; this year it was 10%.

"The grassroots effort by the churches and the cooperation of the churches was unprecedented," Lavy said. "We've never seen that kind of grassroots effort and cooperation..."

Looking back

10 years ago

Mississippi Baptists vote unanimously to honor the late Jerry Clower during the 1998 Mississippi Baptist Convention Oct. 28 at First Church, Jackson. Messengers approve a resolution of appreciation for Clower's life and ministry, and they dedicated the 1998 convention annual to his memory.

20 years ago

Richard Brogan, president of the Mississippi Baptist Seminary in Jackson since 1984, passes the presidential medallion to Hickman Johnson, the seminary's new president, after the Mississippi Baptist Convention votes to sever 45-year-old ties with the predominantly African-American seminary.

50 years ago

The Mississippi Baptist Convention Board makes a definite effort to purchase the U.S. Maritime Academy property at Henderson Point, in Harrison County at the western end of Pass Christian on the Gulf Coast.



THE SECOND FRONT PAGE

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NO. 43



YOU CAN RESPOND RIGHT NOW!

Simply share the following prayer with God in your own words:

1. Lord, I admit that I need you. (I have sinned.)
2. I want forgiveness for my sins and freedom from eternal death. (I repent.)
3. I believe Jesus died and rose from the grave to forgive my sins and to restore my relationship with you. (I believe in Jesus.)
4. By faith, I invite Jesus Christ into my life. From this time on, I want to live in a loving relationship with Him. (I receive Christ as my Savior and Lord.)

"But as many as received him, to them he gave the right to become children of God, even to those who believe in his name." (John 1:12)

If you make a decision for Jesus Christ today, contact a local Baptist church for spiritual guidance.

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By Charles Marx, 1932 - 2004
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OGEWGC YGCQPGK
MAZO ZDO YU
OCNEKSCGKKPZEK.

LKNAYK XPXOU-
ZEG:ZEG

Clue: : Y=M

Have fun with cryptography and exercise your Bible knowledge. A King James Version Bible verse has been encoded by letter substitution. The same letter is substituted throughout the puzzle. Solve by trial and error. Answer to last week's puzzle: Romans Eight One

SOUNDS LIKE CHURCH

Paul Harvey, Jr., filling in for his dad, told about a shopkeeper over in England who owned a Mynah bird. He added two Parrots to his bird collection. He kept all of the birds in his shop which, of course, was a topic of conversation and interest to people who would come in. The problem that developed was that the constant talking of the Parrots irritated the Mynah bird. In fact, the yakking Parrots were about to drive the Mynah bird crazy. The lone Mynah bird, without any outside influence, began to notice that the Parrots were completely quiet whenever the cat came around. As a result, the Mynah bird began to learn to meow. Sure enough, the bothersome Parrots would get quiet. In time, people would be in the shop and ask the owner, "Why in the world do you keep those birds? The Parrots do not ever say anything and the Mynah bird just knows how to meow."

It sounds like church to me. No actually, it did not sound like all churches but occasionally like some churches. How so? Just watch from time to time and see a fellow believer that may have a spiritual gift or gifts different from the norm. You may begin to see the Parrot/Mynah bird tension. It does not have to be right or wrong, good or bad, just different. So what happens is instead of using God-given gifts to bless and help others we start to use them to curtail and diminish others. If we are successful, we will have not only limited our usefulness but also succeeded in restricting



Jim Futral, executive director-treasurer
Mississippi Baptist Convention Board

others. The differences that may exist between people in how they are wired up, and how God gifts them in their likes and dislikes, run the full gamut of human appreciation.

I am not talking about biblical truth or bedrock theology, just personal preferences that when someone else differs from us we quiver. I am so blessed to have the privilege of speaking in our churches across the state and occasionally beyond. Literally, I may be speaking in a church one Sunday that runs in the 20's and the following Sunday a church, that runs in the 2000's. Some have an order of service and some have none. Some have a video screen while others would be traumatized by such an addition. Some churches sing out of the new Baptist Hymnal and others use soft back songbooks. Some churches still recognize and sing Happy Birthday to folks while folks in other churches may not even know who the person is seated beside them. Most churches have childcare during the worship service, but a few bring all of the children into the worship service to guarantee that I will not preach so long. Some make a big deal about celebrating Pastor Appreciation Day at least annually, while there are some who never show appreciation to their pastor.

I could give you about 50 more differences, but you get the picture. I was struck by the differences among us a few years ago when on one Sunday I was preaching at two different churches in different parts of the state. Sunday morning I was in a beautiful rural setting where a precious group of about 30 folks came together to worship. On Sunday night, I was in a much larger church where hundreds came together and it was a meaningful experience with the Lord.

What caught my attention was the music — not just the songs we sang but the instruments that accompanied us. On Sunday morning the man who was leading us in singing did so by playing a harmonica. On some of the songs, a man or two would pick up a guitar or banjo and follow along, but the lead instrument throughout the worship service was the harmonica. I had never experienced anything like that and the further we went the more moving it was to me. They had a piano, but they did not have a pianist.

Sunday night was quite different. The large choir was

well prepared, a huge multi-tiered organ filled the place with multiple tones, and other musicians joined in to lift our hearts. It was a great worship experience for me. As I reflected on my day, I thought how different the two experiences were and then at the same time how similar they were. In both cases, gifted people wanted to praise and worship Jesus. There was a desire to use what gifts and abilities the Lord had given them and in each experience, it seemed to me as though we sat together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus.

If things are a little bit different the next time you go to church, try to find a way to celebrate God at work in and through the person's life who is sharing the gift. Maybe a soloist is not your cup of tea. It could be a person singing a song that does not particularly appeal to your taste, the sermon has a little bit of a different approach, or the speaker has a lisp or an unusual voice quality. Maybe, just maybe you will discover God at work wanting to sweeten your spirit and broaden your understanding of how He uses various people and various approaches to glorify His name.

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ENTERPRISE BAPTIST CHURCH, Enterprise, Miss. is seeking a full-time minister of music, youth and children. Please submit resumes to the search committee, c/o Betty Purvis, 370 C. R. 3763, Enterprise, MS 39330.

PART-TIME MINISTRY ASSISTANT: 24-30 hours per week. Mail resume to Jamie Holden, Hillcrest Baptist Church, 5950 Terry Road, Byram, MS 39272.

MURPHY CREEK BAPTIST CHURCH, Louisville, Miss., is seeking a part-time youth minister. Please send resume to search committee, 5379 Bond Rd, Louisville, Ms. 39339 or macksimmon@aol.com. For more info call 662-779-3957.

PELAHATCHIE BAPTIST CHURCH is seeking a part-time minister of music for worship services, adult, youth, and children's choirs. Please forward resume to the Pelahatchie Baptist Church, search committee, P.O. Box 876, Pelahatchie, MS 39145, attn: Due McKinion. Email: due@rankincounty.org.

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CABIN IN GATLINBURG FOR RENT: 2 bedrm 2 bath, full kitchen, great view of National Park, \$95.00/night. Call for information 281-855-4469 or 832-922-0401/0141. Email pdw4760@att.net.

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SENIOR PASTOR: PARKWOOD Baptist Church, a mission-minded conservative/progressive church that supports our local association, BSC and SBC, is seeking pastor skilled in preaching, teaching, visitation, counseling, visioning, soul-winning, discipleship and administration. Send resumes to PBC, c/o Donna Jennings, Chairperson, PSC, 1069 Central Drive, Concord, NC 28027. Or donnaPastorSearch@carolina.rr.com. Website: www.parkwoodbaptist.com.

STAINED GLASSWORKS, INC., serving MS & AL since 1992. Call 800-605-2970.

SEBREN'S SIDING, JACKSON, Christian owned. All home improvements, vinyl siding, windows, metal and shingle roofs, patio covers, screen and glass rooms. 601-992-2092, Don & Rita Sebrene/owners.

STAINED GLASS: NEW WINDOWS and repairs. Hopper Stained Glass, Jackson, 877-477-1899.

CHURCH PEW UPHOLSTERY, FREE estimates. Davis Upholstery, Quitman, Miss., phone 601-776-6617.

DISCOUNT BAPTISTRIES & STEEPLES. Baptist murals, heaters, lighting, seating, wall crosses, pew cushions, krindglas, carpet, signs. Church Supply Company of Texas, 800-728-8291.

What I tell you in the darkness, speak in the light; and what you hear whispered in your ear, proclaim upon the

HOUSE TOPS.

Matthew 10:27 NAS

November 13, 2008

HouseTops is a Baptist Record supplement produced by the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board's Communication Services.

2009 STATE PRAYER SUMMIT

Morrison Heights BC
Clinton, Mississippi

Mark your calendars now to join the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board women's visionary team, all wMu leaders, women on mission, women's evangelism, women's enrichment ministry, men's ministry, RA leaders and all missions leaders of Area 5 for Personal Renewal.

"Enter-Mission"

Saturday, January 17

9:00 a.m. – 2:30 p.m.

State Prayer Summit

Prayerwalk, Worship Celebration,

Prayer Sessions and Worship

Prayer Concert

+

"Pray-over Clinton"

9:00 a.m.

Begins

Morrison Heights BC

10:15 a.m.

Return to church

10:30

Worship Celebration

11:45

Lunch

(\$5 preregistration form
at www.mbcab.org)

12:30 p.m.

Prayer Sessions

one for women &

one for men

1:30

Prayer Concert

2:30

Adjourn

Special Guests



Kevin Meador



Elaine Helms

Clinton Motel Info

Best Western

601-926-4323

Econo Lodge

601-924-9364

Days Inn

601-925-5065

Hampton Inn

601-925-9393

Clinton Inn

601-924-5313

Quality Inn

601-924-0064

Ramada Inn

601-925-4040

Holiday Inn Express

601-708-0400

Comfort Inn/Suites

601-925-8250

For more info, contact Kathy Burns: 601-292-3324, 1-800-748-1651 or kburns@mbcab.org

Bivo/Small Church Ministers and Wives Retreat

December 5-6

WILLIAM CAREY UNIVERSITY
HATTIESBURG

Leaders:
Ray Gilder
Tommy King

For more info contact the Pastor/Leadership Development Department:
601-292-3305 1-800-748-1651, ext 305, or kmcdonnell@mbcb.org



SINGLES

Find Hope Singles' Conference Saturday, January 24, 2009

Where: Easthaven Baptist Church, Brookhaven
Speaker: Dr. John Goosar, Tennessee
Time: 8:30 a.m. - noon
Cost: \$25 (includes continental breakfast, book, and lunch)

Deadline to register is January 19.
Register before December 31 to receive a free T-shirt.

For more information, call 601-833-8111
or E-mail: www.easthaven.net

Sponsored by MBCB Discipleship and Family Ministry

SINGLES' PURPOSE EVENT

When: Saturday, March 7
Where: FBC, Laurel
Speaker: Ron Mumbower
Time: 10:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m.
Cost: \$5 (includes lunch)
Break-outs: Throwing off Burdens
Joy for the Journey
Missions: "Block Party"

Sponsored by
MBCB Discipleship
and Family Ministry

To register call 601-649-5710 or E-mail: evajcbo@aol.com
Register before March 2 and receive a devotion book and a nice gift bag.



State Senior Adult Evangelism Rally

Tuesday, January 20, 2009

Morrison Heights Baptist Church, Clinton

Preacher: Perry Sanders, former pastor of
First Baptist Church, Lafayette, La.
Music: Graham Smith, State Music Director, MBCB
Pianist: Irene Martin, Harpersville

- Break-outs:**
1. **Pray without Ceasing:**
Kathy Burns, WMU State Consultant
 2. **Evangelism Through Homebound:**
Gary Mayfield, Professor at MC
 3. **Share Jesus without Fear:**
P.J. Scott, Olive Branch
 4. **Seniors on Missions (Leadership):**
Bob Jackson, Senior Mission Lab, NOBTS
 5. **Deal or No Deal:**
Daniel Hall, MBCB

For contact information, call Dennis at 601-924-5621.
Sponsored by MBCB Discipleship and Family Ministry



Christian
Performing Arts
Festival

February 27-28, 2009
Ridgecrest BC, Madison

If you have any questions about the
festival, please contact
601-292-3283 or
1-800-748-1651 or E-mail at
redwards@mbcb.org

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conferences

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- Clowning
- Puppetry
- Church Recreation
- Student Ministry
- Media
- Missions

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and Family Ministry

**TAKE IT TO
YOUR WORLD**

YOUTH EVANGELISM CHALLENGE

December 29-30, 2008

Details: For more info: Contact the Evangelism Department at 601-292-3278, 1-800-748-1651 or jellis@mbcb.org or go to www.mbcb.org

REGISTRATION BEGINS
Mon. Dec. 29, 100 p.m.

CHALLENGE CONCLUDES
Tue. Dec. 30, 100 p.m.

*Merry Christmas to pastors in the
Baptist Conventions of New England & Nevada*



The Suit Project

● *What is the suit project?*

For over 45 years Mississippi Baptists have enjoyed sending new suits to pastors in new work areas. Many of these pastors have no suit nor have the extra money to purchase one. By sending them a suit we are letting the pastors know that we care about them and that we support their work.

● *What can I do?*

Simply make a donation to the ministry. Each suit will cost \$135. This can be a special project for Men's Ministry groups, Royal Ambassadors, Girls in Action, or WMU groups. For churches or individuals looking for a ministry that really touches someone's life, the Suit Project is the perfect choice.

● *Where do I send my donation?*

Make your check payable to the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board and designate your check to the Suit Project.

Mail to:

Men's Ministry Department, P.O. Box 530, Jackson, MS 39205-0530
(Questions? Call Deanna Vail, 601-292-3335 or 1-800-748-1651)

Pastors' Wives If funds are available, we will send a clothing gift certificate for the pastor's wife! Often they go without things that they want or need to support their husband's ministry. This is a wonderful way to show them that they are not forgotten and that the support they provide their husband is truly appreciated.

Blue Mountain College, Blue Mountain, Miss.
July 13-17, July 20-24



Worship



Classes

Recreation choices:

Crafts
Super Slide
Horse Safety
Swimming
Crocheting
Thunder Cake Bake
Handbells
Orff
Airplane Fly
... and many more



The public is invited to the concert
Thursday, 7:30 p.m.
Lowrey Memorial Baptist Church, Blue Mountain

2009 OPPORTUNITIES LEADERSHIP TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT

Pastor/Leadership Development Department
Mississippi Baptist Convention Board

*"... whoever wants
to be great among you
must be your servant."*

Mark 10:43

**Start planning NOW to take advantage of the
2009 opportunities for Leadership Training and Development.
Contact us for our 2009 brochure!**

For more info contact the Pastor/Leadership Development Department:
601-292-3305, 1-800-748-1651, ext 305, or deanna@mbcb.org

Pray this day for...

November 14 - December 4, 2008

Prayer Ministry Office • P.O. Box 530 • Jackson, MS 39205-0530 • Phone 601-292-3304 • Mississippi PrayerLine 1-800-787-7729 (PRAY)

*"The king's heart is in the hand of the Lord:
he directs it like a watercourse wherever
he pleases."*
Proverbs 21:1

Pray for those still recovering from Hurricane Katrina. Jamie is a mission coordinator working with Lakeshore Baptist Church in Bay St. Louis, Miss. Pray for obedience and boldness as she shares the gospel with the people of the hurricane-torn Gulf Coast.

Becky is an MSC working in children's evangelism for the Mississippi Convention in Water Valley. Pray that God will lead Christian teachers to share with the "Light of Christ" to children, especially in the public school settings (see Gal. 5:22-23).

(1) International Missions Emphasis 11/30 - 12/7 (wMu); (2) Rob is a Navy chaplain serving in Naples, Italy. He recently went on a service project to Opava, Czech Republic, with the Military Community Youth Ministries (MCYM). Pray that the gospel message that was planted with high school and college students will grow into a bountiful harvest.

Pray for Roger who serves as the chief chaplain for the Tripler Army Medical Center in Hawaii. Please pray for the service men and women who are in harms' way every day.

Serena is a sending strategist for Next Generation Ministries. Pray for the planning of mission opportunities for Illinois college students, and pray that students will be led to serve in missions during Christmas.

Mark is a church planter/pastor, a full-time postmaster in Ohio and, praise the Lord, has been cancer-free for 18 months. He is serving a growing congregation (14 to 100+ in 5 years). Pray for him and for Jody as they seek God's direction in planting a second church within the next year. Pray for wisdom in making Kingdom decisions.

Kenn is the pastor of FBC, Greentown, Ind., where members have made a commitment to pray for every family in their town. Pray they will soon complete this effort as they visit every home, pray with the family, and give them a Bible.

Lahoma and Johnnie are MSC coordinators serving with Green Mountain Association in Vermont. Pray for their leading Lifeway Bible Fellowship in Waterbury as they continue to search for a church planter. Also pray for someone to lead this small group while they are traveling to see family during Christmas.

(1) MBCB Executive Committee Meeting and Board Meeting; (2) Yuji and Jeri are MSC missionaries working with international students at the University of North Alabama. Pray that God will give them wisdom to know exactly how to reach these students, and that He will open their hearts raising up committed Christian students.

Sonny is a church planter/pastor serving Saint Paul Family Ministries in Rialto, California. Praise God for this new and fast-growing church. Pray for God's wisdom and direction in every decision for the future of this church.

Clint is a MSC Coordinator in Tucson, Ariz. Pray for the resort ministry team as they complete this season, and for God's blessings on the truck stop and Indian ministries.

(1) Baptist Building At Home Days; (2) Kent is ADOM for the Grand Valley Association of Colorado. Pray for Dean Shepard who is the new church planter in Palisade. Pray for the development and growth of the core group in this small town. Praise the Father for providing him a job working in a local hardware store, where he is meeting new people and building relationships.

Henry and Shirley are church planters for Seed International Church among peoples of Africa who are in Richmond, Va. Pray for the Lord to add servants to their team and to open the door for relocation for their outreach ministry.

(1) We are blessed to be a blessing. Ask God to open our eyes to the abundance He has provided for us in the USA, and show us how He would have us share; (2) Teri is the assistant for world impact development and international ministries for FBC Woodstock, Ga. Their church has ministered for nine years to the ethnically diverse children of Clarkston, Ga.

David is a mentoring missionary serving with One Kid (mentoring for school age boys and girls) and Operation Timothy (mentoring for businessmen) in North Carolina. Pray for boldness and wisdom in each opportunity for ministry partner development, and for the investment of time and energy in the opportunities that God provides.

Pray for: (1) Global Impact Conference, Garaywa, 14th-15th (MMOB); (2) Mike is the director of missions for the Southeastern Association (SEA) in New Mexico. Pray for Mike as he starts two new Spanish Bible studies through two churches in this association.

Mike is director of missions and men's ministries for the Alaska Convention. Pray for the 21 pastorless congregations (20% of their congregations), and for the five vacant ABC/NAMB-appointed missionary positions (33% of their positions). Pray that the laborers will reply to God's call to partner with them in Alaska.

Frank is the ADOM/church planting strategist for the Tri-County Association of W.V. New Vision Mission began Sunday services August 17. Pray the Lord will raise up a strong core group from the local community in Morgan County. Also pray for God's direction in a new church plant being developed in Jefferson County.

Pray for Kennedy, a church planter/pastor for the International House of Worship in Arlington, Texas. Pray for spiritual revival for the United States. Pray also for physical and spiritual strength and for God's leading for Kennedy, as he plans the launch of his second book this month.

Freddie is a church planter missionary. Pray for Steve and Bonnie McNeal as they go to restart a church in Venice, La., that was destroyed by Hurricane Katrina.

Bobby and Kelli are US/C-2 church planting missionaries who serve on a church planting team in Washington State. Pray for a smooth adjustment to the new meeting location, for them to grow from 50 to 80 this fall and that through these goals and changes, God will be glorified and they will reach a new segment of the community.

PLEASE PUT THESE DATES ON YOUR CALENDAR NOW!!!

MISSISSIPPI BAPTIST 2009 Christian Education Clinics

February 14 Highland Baptist Church, Meridian
March 7 Ridgecrest Baptist Church, Madison
May 9 Woolmarket Baptist Church, Biloxi

It is the desire of Mississippi Baptists to offer quality training for those who affect the lives of Mississippi's most precious citizens. Please make plans to attend the 2009 clinic of your choice. If you have any questions, please call.

Discipleship & Family Ministry
Mississippi Baptist Convention Board
1-800-748-1651 or 601-292-3284
E-mail: dhicks@mbcb.org

Susie McNair, Clinic Coordinator
Christian Education Clinic
601-954-8650
E-mail: gsmcnair@yahoo.com



THE BROCHURE WITH THE REGISTRATION FORM WILL BE SENT LATER THIS YEAR.

HOUSE TOPS

www.mbcb.org

Battle of the Bulge vet: promise made, promise kept

Editor's note: November 11 was observed across the U.S. as Veteran's Day. Below is the story of one veteran who experienced the worst war has to offer, and returned home to make a difference for Christ in his world.

BENTLEY, La. (BP) — The words came slowly at first and then in a rush, as 88-year-old Willis Prather started to recall memories buried long ago. Sitting at his kitchen table in front of a stack of old pictures, it was hard to tell by his voice, still strong and vibrant, what he was feeling as he recounted experiences from World War II.

His hands, though, finally gave him away. "I saw some terrible things back then that I don't

want to ever see again. I have done my best to block them from my memories," Prather said, wringing his hands periodically. "As hard as I try, though, I can't forget them — the images, sounds and smells. I believe the good Lord just doesn't want me to forget them."

An active member of Bethel Church in Bentley, La., since 1946, the World War II veteran remembers when, as a member of the famed 82nd Airborne, he was one of millions of fellow U.S. servicemen who fought their way across Europe and the Pacific during the dark and bloody days of World War II.

He was part of a generation that helped shape the modern world and paved the way for

freedom. His generation has been hailed as America's greatest generation — a title many, including Prather, accept humbly.

His career in the 82nd began in a roundabout way as the 23-year-old transplant from Mowata, a small Cajun community between Crowley and Eunice, La., joined the division as a replacement in the field artillery at Fort Sill in Lawton, Ok.

"I went from the 320th Field Artillery Battalion to the 319th Field Artillery and then to the 407th Quartermaster Company," Prather said. "I landed in Normandy on D-Day not by parachute, but in a glider which was pretty rough for some of us."

On D-Day the 407th Airborne QM Company went into Normandy in two echelons, the first in gliders and the remaining contingent by ship. The gliderborne contingent landed in the early morning hours on June 6 and set up a temporary base on the outskirts of Blosville, a short distance from Ste. Mere Eglise.

The 82nd saw extensive action in the coming months, but it was on the evening of Dec. 17 they would receive their greatest challenge of the war. The day before, the Germans had launched a surprise attack through the Ardennes Forest that caught everyone off guard.

"I had just gone to bed when they got us up around 11 and told us we had to drive 30 miles to a place called Camp Suippes in Sissone, France, to get supplies," Prather said. "They didn't tell us much except the Germans had broken through our lines. We were up all night driving, loading and unloading."

"The 101st were already in Camp Suippes and left immediately for Bastogne [Belgium] where they immediately became encircled. We followed and went into the lines close by them," Prather said, referring to the 101st Airborne Division. "We didn't leave those lines until six weeks later. I went two weeks without taking a bath, and when I did it was water from my helmet."

They had hurriedly been thrown into the line to stem the German advance in what quickly became known as the Battle of the Bulge. They had very little winter clothing, ammunition or equipment. About all they did have were guts and their faith.

"There was no such thing as 'quiet time' in the line," Prather said. "We had chaplains, not many of whom were Baptist, and we tried to attend services every chance we could, but it was difficult."

"The cold was terrible. The snow was up to a man's waist, and higher in the ditches. We were constantly shelled, and we lost a lot of good men during that time. Despite all of that, no one ever seemed to lose



WAR MEMORIES — Eighty-eight-year-old Willis Prather of Bentley, La., closes his eyes and wrings his hands when recalling his experiences during World War II in the famed 82nd Airborne Division as American troops raced across Europe to defeat the Nazis. (BP photo)

faith or give up hope. We knew God was behind us and He would take care of us."

On Christmas morning the weather finally broke, the sun came out, and the planes grounded because of the weather were able to deliver much-needed supplies to those on the ground. The allies counterattacked shortly afterward and they were soon able to turn the tables on the Germans, which effectively broke the German army's back and hastened the end of the war.

"Looking back on that time, I was scared, but I didn't fear death because I knew I was saved and I would be going to heaven. I was saved when I was 11 years old at Pilgrim Rest Baptist Church," Prather said. "He built up my faith. I knew He was with me and that brought me peace in the midst of war, and there were many times I needed that inner peace."

Prather returned home on Christmas Day 1945 to his wife and a young son born while Prather was on guard duty at Fort Sill. He moved his family to Colfax, La., bought the house in which he still lives, and settled into raising his family.

Shortly after moving into his new house, he joined Bethel Church and became a deacon in 1952. He did a little farming and then went to work for E.S. Voelker Company in Alexandria, repairing hay balers. He retired in 1981 after 31 years.

Retirement is just a word for Prather, who stays busy fixing balers on the side or working in the hay business. He's also active at his church.

"I made a promise to the Lord that if I got out of there in one piece I would get someplace and never leave there again and I would devote my life to lifting Him up to others," Prather said.

Prather has been a man of his word, as he has taught a men's

adult Sunday School class at Bethel Church since the late 1940s and for more than seven years spent time on the local radio station spreading the Word.

"I have been truly blessed," Prather said. "All of my children are Christians and are active in church. I have been a deacon and a Sunday school teacher in the same church for 61 years. I've also been a part of a group of men who have gone to the radio station where we held prayer meetings on the air."

"I put my trust in the Lord when I was 11 years old, and He has never left my side. When people ask me how I made it through the war without a scratch, I tell them God, because through Him all things are possible."

REVIVALS AND HOMECOMINGS

1. **Mt. Olive Church, Okolona:** Homecoming/Thanksgiving/Harvest Celebration, Nov. 16, 10:30 a.m., followed by lunch at noon and afternoon singing at 1:30 p.m. with the Master's Quartet. A love offering will be received for Master's Quartet. Marion Tumberlinson, pastor.
2. **First Church, Tutwiler:** 100-year Anniversary and Homecoming: Nov. 16, 10:30 a.m., followed by fellowship dinner. John Thomas, speaker. J.B. Hays Jr., pastor.
3. **Bogue Chitto church, Pike County:** Homecoming, Nov. 23; Sunday School 10 a.m.; Worship Service 11 a.m. followed by lunch and afternoon service at 1:30 p.m. featuring Serendipity.

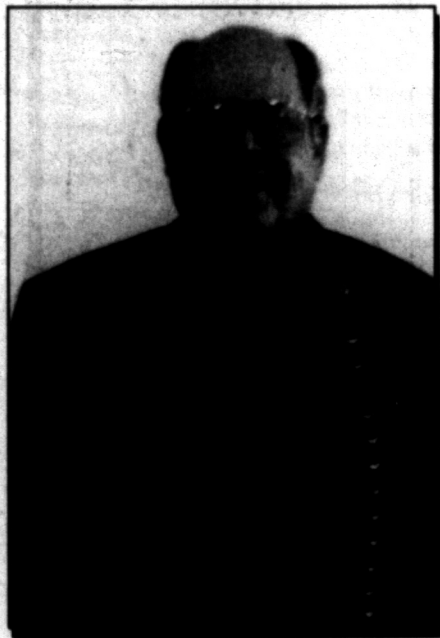


JUST FOR THE RECORD

1. **Salem Church, Toomsaba,** recently honored John Johnson for 48 years of perfect attendance in Sunday School. Thomas J. Wood is interim pastor.
2. **Franklin Association** honored missions director Joe Hill (center) on Oct. 13 upon the occasion of the 51st anniversary of his ordination at Providence Church,

Meadville. Hill's wife JoAnn (right) was at his side when he received a commemorative plaque from Meadville Mayor Earl Case.

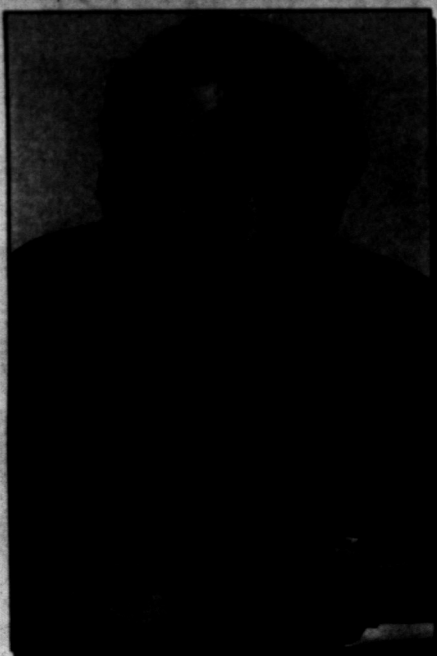
3. **First Church, Batesville,** will stage Last Chance, a drama that follows a grandfather's life through the lives of his children and grandchildren, on Nov. 16 at 6 p.m., and on Nov. 17-18 at 7 p.m.



1. Salem Church



2. Franklin Association



2. J.B. Potts

1. Mississippi State University head football coach Sylvester Croom will be the keynote speaker at the annual Wild Game dinner on Dec. 9 on the campus of Mississippi College in Clinton. For more information, contact Missa Turman at (601) 925-3341. E-mail: turman@mc.edu.
2. Mississippi College (MC) English professor J.B. Potts will deliver the 2008 Distinguished Lecture for the Mississippi Humanities Council at 7 p.m. on Nov. 24 in the Jean Pittman Williams Recital Hall of the Ave. Fine Arts Building on MC's Clinton campus. Potts is currently president of the Mississippi Philological Association and editor of the literary journal POMPA.
3. The William Carey University Speech and Debate Team placed first in a combined sweepstakes at the University of Houston/Louisiana State University (LSU) Swing Speech and Debate Tournament held recently in Texas. The team also placed first overall in individual events, third overall in debate, and first in combined individual events at the LSU segment of the tournament. Pictured are team members with director Jennifer Talbert (center back).



3. William Carey Speech and Debate Team

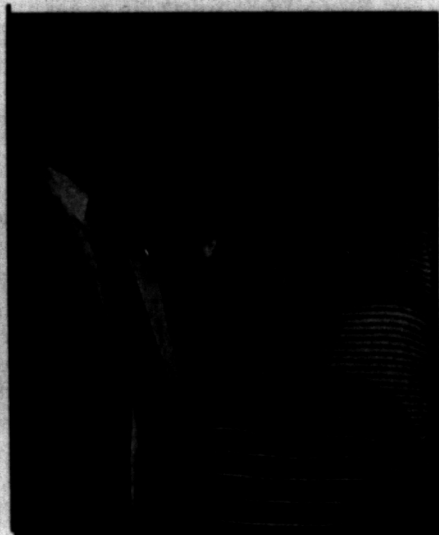
4. Jerrod McCabe (left) a senior religion major at William Carey University (WCU) in Hattiesburg, is the recipient of the E.R. Pinson Scholarship from the Mississippi Baptist Board of Ministerial Education. Presenting the scholarship to the McComb native is Daniel Caldwell, dean of the Cooper School of Missions and Biblical Studies in WCU. McCabe recently served as interim pastor of Thompson Hill Church, Beaumont, and will attend Southwestern Seminary upon graduation.

5. Jennifer Staley (seated, left) and Claire Loop (standing), senior economic specialists at the New Orleans branch of the Federal Reserve Bank of Atlanta, recently spoke to students at William Carey University in Hattiesburg.



STAFF CHANGES

1. Eighth Avenue Church, Meridian, called Tim Craddock in July to serve as pastor. Pictured with Craddock are his wife Marie and daughter Karla.



1. The Craddocks

1. Lakeside Church, Hattiesburg, will hold new church dedication ceremonies on Nov. 23, beginning at 10 a.m. Activities include service of dedication, baby/children's dedication, communion, baptism, harvest feast, and Gospel sing.

2. Leflore Church, Leflore, will host their annual Hee Haw program on Nov. 14-15. On Nov. 14, Gospel singing with Second Chance and Voices of Faith will begin at 6 p.m. before the program begins at 7 p.m. On Nov. 15, fish plates will be available beginning at 5 p.m., before the program begins at 7 p.m.

3. First Church, Richton, recently honored long-time volunteer church librarian Katherine Bush by renaming the church's library in her honor to the Katherine P. Bush Library and Media Center.



3. First Church, Richton

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4. William Carey University scholarship recipient



5. Staley and Loop

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Jayess, Mississippi

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This announcement is neither an offer nor a solicitation of an offer to buy. The offer is made by prospectus only. For more information about this bond issue, obtain a prospectus, which describes all of the particulars of this offering. Read it carefully before you invest or send money. All bonds are offered at face value, subject to prior sale.

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BIBLE STUDIES FOR LIFE

Key Christian Duties

Romans 13:1-14

By Bobby McKay

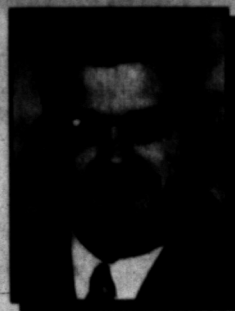
There are few things in Mississippi as colorful as our relationship with politics. Events like the Neshoba County Fair are a long-standing tradition in our state's culture. Some of the most spirited and interesting conversations I have are not over theology, but rather views on the political landscape. The presidential election that concluded earlier this month was truly a phenomenon to behold. A record number of voters, the amount of money each campaign spent, and finally the election of the first African-American President in our nation's history were newsmakers we will not soon forget. Regardless of the candidates you voted for in the last election or the allegiance

you may hold to a particular party, we are told in Scripture to pray for those who serve in roles of authority.

I do not have to agree with each policy or belief of a politician to earnestly pray for him or her. While our elected officials may serve the public, they (like us) are ultimately accountable to God. As long as the laws of our nation do not violate the holiness and righteousness of God, we should graciously respect those that are striving to lead in our society. It is my desire that as we study the lesson together this week we will ask God to humble us as we each strive to submit to authority.

I. Submission (Romans 13:1-7)

The major theme found in the opening verses of chapter 13 is the teaching of submission. For some, submission is a



McKay

dirty word. For others, it is a misinterpreted word. For Paul, it was a powerful word. Do you realize that every one answers to somebody? No one is exempt from submission and accountability. Even President-elect Obama will answer to the Lord for his actions. Through these verses Paul reminds the reader that as Christians we should model what it means to be a good citizen. Remember that the Roman believers at this time were experiencing a government that was far from perfect. Paul could write these words encouraging submission because he knew that God was the ultimate authority. Our motivation for civil obedience should not be motivated by fear. We respect those governing us because in doing so we recognize them as "ministers of God" (verses 4 and 6). While God's hand in our government is not always clearly seen, we can trust His sover-

eignty and know that in the end He will reign supreme.

II. Standard (Romans 13:8-10)

An indication of genuine submission is love. Love is the standard that we all wish to demonstrate to not only fellow Christians, but those that are lost as well. Paul encouraged believers to not be tied down to debt, rather let love rule their daily lives. Verse 9 serves as a reminder for the standard of the law as well. We have studied the past few weeks the repeated teaching that we are all sinners and unable to be declared righteous based on ourselves. Paul does not want the reader to forget this. He states in verse 10 that, "Love does no wrong to a neighbor; therefore, love is the fulfilling of the law" (NRSV). If we love those around us as well as do good to our neighbor, we fulfill the law. This type of love is not displayed from us unless Christ has done a work in us.

III. Shoes (Romans 13:11-14)

We conclude chapter 13 with an appeal to action. Paul urges these early believers to wake up. He lived in the anticipation that

Christ was going to return at any moment. We may scoff at that notion, but Paul was firmly convinced that the return of the Lord was about to take place. Do we share this same urgency in the year 2008? He wrote in verse 13 for these believers to walk honorably. Do you remember being taught as a child to wipe your shoes off before you entered the house? Obviously, this was to keep someone from tracking mud or dirt into the home. He did not want them to walk in the shoes of the world. He asked them to avoid the "mud" of drunkenness, strife, quarreling and jealousy. Paul implored them to put on Jesus and do not make any provision for the desires of the flesh.

I am reminded of the two presidential campaign slogans. "Country First" and "Yes We Can", were repeated a countless number of times. Allow me to offer you a paraphrase: Can we live a life pleasing to God? With Christ first in our lives, yes we can!

McKay is pastor of Oakvale Church, Oak Vale.

EXPLORE THE BIBLE

When Tangled in Sin

2 Samuel 9:1-12:31

By Ginger M. Caughman

"Oh what a tangled web we weave when first we practice to deceive!"

The Scottish writer Sir Walter Scott (1771-1832) penned those profound words. Certainly they were true of David in this week's passage. David committed a series of sins beginning with lust, then adultery, deception, and pre-meditated murder. Our awesome God lets us choose whether or not to follow His commandments. God was not pleased with David's actions. Nor is God pleased when you and I sin. What is the middle letter in the word sin? The big "I".

Before the focal passage, notice David's compassion as he asked to see any descendants of Saul because he wanted to show kindness for Jonathan's sake (2 Samuel 9). Mephibosheth [Me-FIB'-o-sheth] was five-years-old when

his grandfather Saul and father Jonathan were killed. The nurse dropped the child as she fled for their lives and Mephibosheth was crippled in both feet (2 Sam. 4:4). David "granted Jonathan's son special position and privilege in David's court." He moved to Jerusalem and ate at the king's table (2 Sam. 9: 1-13). In later years, David spared Mephibosheth (21:7).

David continued to win battles and defeat armies (2 Sam. 10). But one

Spring "at the time when kings go off to war," (11:1) David stayed home. "When the king was at the height of his power and fame, he yielded to temptation and in an hour of weakness committed sin, which brought shame and fearful consequences to himself and his family. The temptation came in a period of idleness." (H. I. Hester, "The Heart of Hebrew History").



Caughman

Walking on his rooftop, David glanced at Bathsheba bathing, but then looked again with lust, sent for her and committed adultery (11:2-5). Bathsheba was the wife of Uriah thus David broke God's 7th commandment (Ex. 20:14). Bathsheba became pregnant.

"Like so many men (and women) before and since his day, David attempted to cover one sin by another" (Hester). David sent for Uriah to go home but the loyal soldier would not sleep with his wife when his men were uncomfortable in the field. David made him drunk but Uriah still slept outside his house (11:6-13).

David wrote a letter to Joab, the leader of his army, to place Uriah at the front of the battle and arrange for his death. After Uriah's died, David took Bathsheba as his wife (11:14-27).

Sin Confronted

"To whom much is given, much is required" (Luke 12:48b). Leaders have obligations to their followers but first of all to God. David was God's chosen and anointed leader. "The thing that

David had done displeased the Lord" (11:27b) and God sent his prophet Nathan to confront David with a parable (12:1-4).

Sin Personalized

In Nathan's story, David was incensed with the man's actions. Then Nathan dramatically declared: "You are the man!" and enumerated what God said (12:5-8).

Sin Judged

Do you believe and live by God's Word? Nathan asked David, "Why did you despise the Word of the Lord?" (12:9-12). Over and over Scripture declares we are to keep God's commands.

Sins Confessed and Forgiven

David acknowledged and confessed his sin (12:13-14). "Accepting responsibility for sin is a necessary step to receiving God's forgiveness." God is merciful and forgives sin but consequences must be dealt with. The child died (15-23) and in time, Solomon was born (24). Read the rest of the chapter (25-31).

The family in America needs God! Husband or wife, if you are tangled in sin or contemplating adultery, read David's confession in Psalm 51 and let the Holy Spirit of God speak to you. My

pastor, Bro. Buddy Keyes preached yesterday, "Every sin can be overcome if you want to!"

David was the man after God's own heart even after he committed such deep sin because he humbled himself before God and experienced the convicting cleansing of the Holy Spirit of God.

Sir Walter Scott also wrote: "A sound head, an honest heart, and an humble spirit are the three best guides through time and eternity."

In the new "Baptist Hymnal" a familiar invitation hymn under the category, "Surrender, repentance, commitment" concludes: "My heart, my life, my all I bring..."

Beloved Baptist hymn writer, B. B. McKinney expressed the repentance required by David and by each of us every time we sin. 1 John 1:9 promises: "If we confess our sins... He will forgive and cleanse all our unrighteousness." Let God untangle your sin today.

Caughman teaches a senior ladies Sunday School class at First Church Magee.

Guidelines for submitting news and photographs

The Baptist Record is pleased to publish news and photographs of special events that take place in cooperating churches of the Mississippi Baptist Convention.

News submitted for publication in The Baptist Record must be either (a) typewritten, (b) neatly printed on 8 1/2 by 11-inch paper, or (c) neatly printed on standardized forms provided by the newspaper. All articles must be received in writing; no articles will be accepted over the telephone.

News may be submitted electronically to the address below, and must be contained in the message segment of an e-mail form. Due to increasing virus threats, no text attachments will be accepted. Photograph attachments are permissible.

Please make articles concise. Include the who, what, when, where details of the story, along with a contact person's address and telephone number.

Photographs may be color or black and white. Instant photos and digital printouts are not reproducible. Digital photos may be used if

submitted as a JPEG file via either (a) e-mail, (b) three-and-a-half inch floppy disk, or (c) CD. Photos must be clear, sharp, and well-lighted. Cell phone photographs and other low resolution items are generally not publishable. Photographs can not be returned. Please do not attach photos with tape or staples.

All news items are subject to editing, and all photographs are subject to cropping. Photographs must depict people. No landscape, building, or object-only photographs will be printed. News items and/or photographs can be published one time only. News items and/or photographs depicting benefits and activities for secular or outside organizations will not be published. Deadline for submitting news is one week prior to requested publication date.

Articles that are not date-sensitive will be published on a space-available basis.

Submit news and photographs to The Baptist Record, P.O. Box 530, Jackson, MS 39205-0530. FAX: (601) 292-3330. E-mail: baptistrecord@mbcb.org.

THE BAPTIST
Record



1. Rienzi Church, Rienzi

1. In recognition of outstanding support for missions by Rienzi Church, Rienzi, Jim Futral (right) recently presented Titus Tyer, pastor of Rienzi Church, with a framed reproduction of the first Baptist Church in Mississippi.

2. Goodwater Church, Lauderdale Association, honored Gloria Allen (left) on Oct. 26 for 50 years of service playing both the piano and organ. She was presented a commemorative plaque by pastor Jim Smith.



2. Goodwater Church, Lauderdale



3. Calvary Church, Pascagoula

3. Women of Calvary Church, Pascagoula, who attended the Fueled by Faith state women's retreat Oct. 17-18 at Camp Garaywa in Clinton included (from left) Merle Ivy, Doris Thomas, Gayle Bowman, Rachel Turner, Min Miller, Gaye Down Boyd.

4. The Calvary Church, Bogue Chitto, Senior Quilters recently completed a king-size Log Cabin quilt to help furnish the soon to be completed fellowship hall at the church. Participating were (from left) Ruth Crosby, Edwina Allen, Bobbie McCaffrey, Addie Faye Dixon, Lynn Reeves, and Audrey Wright. Trent Bilbo is pastor.

5. Eight Avenue Church, Meridian recently elected new deacons. Pictured are (from left) deacon Jere Skelton and wife Faye, and deacon Dan Brown and wife Jo Nelle.

6. Meadville Church, Meadville, recently ordained Justin Foster (left) as deacon. Pictured with Foster are wife Tara and interim pastor, Emory May.

7. The Royal Ambassadors (RAs), Acteens, and Girls in Action (GAs) of Branch Church, Morton, recently raised \$492 in a prayer walk for world hunger. Pictured are participants with youth minister Adam Bobo and his wife Leigh Ann.

8. Harrisburg Church, Tupelo, recently honored Sam Atkins (second from left) for 56 years of perfect attendance in Sunday School. Pictured with Atkins are (from left) Anna Atkins; Patti Robey, preschool director; and Ed Page, Sunday School director.

9. Pilgrim's Rest Church, Ethel, will host A Long Way to Go in concert at 6 p.m. on Nov. 30. A love offering will be received.

10. Arlington Church, Bogue Chitto, will conduct a dedication and worship service Nov. 23, beginning at 11 a.m. The church will be dedicating the newly-renovated sanctuary and educational building. Lunch will be served after the services.



5. Deacon ordination, Eighth Avenue Church, Meridian



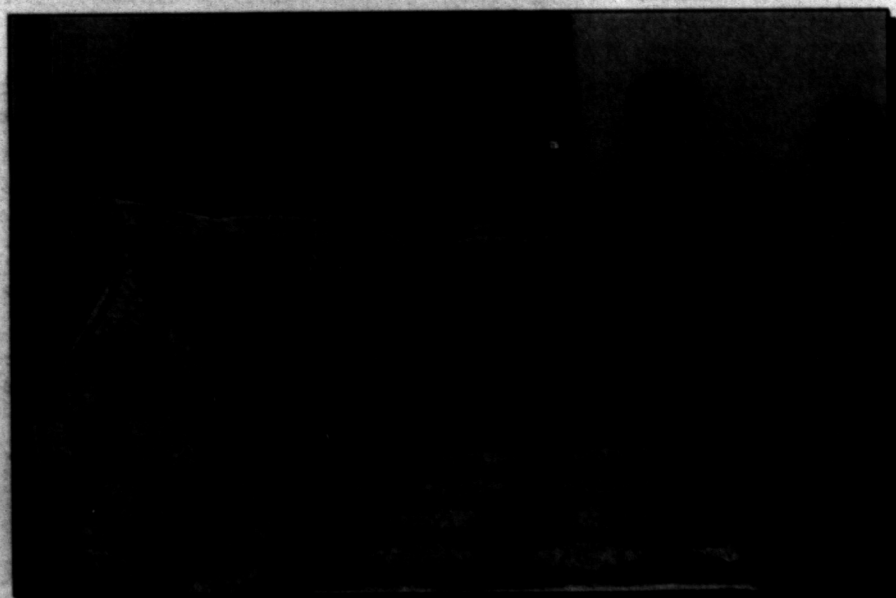
6. Deacon ordination, Meadville Church



7. Branch Church, Morton



8. Harrisburg Church, Tupelo



4. Calvary Church, Bogue Chitto



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